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REASONS,

HUMBLY SUBMITTED TO THE

HONOURABLE MEMBERS

OF BOTH

HOUSES of PARLIAMENT,

FOR

INTRODUCING A LAW,

TO PREVENT

UNNECESSARY and VEXATIOUS

REMOVALS OF THE POOR;

THEREBY TO REDUCE

PARISH EXPENCES,

BY LETTING THE

POOR live where they can beſt earn their BREAD,

TILL THEY BECOME CHARGEABLE.

by Wm. Greaves (W)

CAMBRIDGE,

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Reprinted 1780.

BRITISH MUSEUM
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TO THE

HONOURABLE the MEMBERS

OF BOTH

HOUSES of PARLIAMENT.

Fulborne, Cambridgeſhire, January 1, 1780.

I Printed in 1775 a few copies of the annexed Pamphlet, without ſubſcribing my name to it, ſubmitting to the honourable members the expediency of introducing a Law, to prevent unneceſſary and vexatious removals of the Poor, and thereby to relieve the Poor from undeſerved hardſhips, and to reduce pariſh expences; and the plan being approved of and judged proper to have a Bill introduced into the Houſe of Commons upon it, ſeveral worthy members took it under their patronage, and introduced a Bill accordingly, which met with ſo favourable a reception, that it miſcarried only by a very

few votes; and as I attended at that time in town to have endeavoured, if called on, to explain any doubts, or anſwer any objections, as far as I was able, I thereby became known to have thrown together thoſe hints, on which the Bill was founded, and that has occaſioned my being now applied to, by ſeveral acquaintance, and other reputable perſons with whom I have not the honour of perſonal acquaintance, deſiring I would endeavour to get the Bill introduced again, as they hope, the time may be near at hand, when a favourable end may be put to the wars we are now engaged in, and the cool voice of reaſon and humanity heard and attended to. And as interruptions to trade and commerce have and will happen in war, and the expences incurred by war, muſt, when it is ended, affect the induſtrious poor, and may occaſion more emigrations; that therefore they think, ſuch a Bill to relieve them from the hardſhips they now labour under, and prevent their emigrations, is now more particularly neceſſary, conſidering the numbers the nation has been drained of in the preſent wars by death and ſickneſs, and how much the ſafety of the nation depends on the number of its inhabitants.

I therefore think it incumbent to ſay, I ſhould not decline any trouble in my power, to endeavour to promote what gen-

gentlemen of ſuperior judgment think might now be ſerviceable to the induſtrious poor, and beneficial to the public; but as my very advanced age and infirmities prevent my attempting to wait on any members in town to get the Bill introduced again, all I can do is to have copies of the annexed pamphlet reprinted, and diſtributed to the Members of both Houſes; which if on any of their peruſal they approve it, by introducing the Bill as brought in in 1775, or if it is the means of having a more beneficial one brought in, I ſhall have the ſatisfaction of having uſed my beſt endeavours for the benefit of the poor and the public.

And I think it is but juſtice to ſuch gentlemen of the Bar as are Members of the Houſe of Commons, to mention, that when the Bill was brought in in 1775, tho' it is well known how much many gentlemen of the Bar get by ſuch unneceſſary and vexatious removals at ſeſſions, which if the Bill had paſſed would be prevented, they did not only not oppoſe the Bill, but actually encouraged it.

If the attention of both Houſes ſhould be too much engaged on intereſting national concerns to attend to a Bill of the length it was in 1775, it is humbly ſubmitted whether it would not be ſufficient if

if a ſhort clauſe was tacked to any Bill to the following purport:

That any perſon coming to live in any pariſh, and getting examined on coming into ſuch pariſh, before a Juſtice of Peace of the diviſion, as to his laſt ſettlement, and lodging it with the overſeer, ſuch perſon ſhall not be removeable till he is actually chargeable.

I am,

With all due regard to the

Honourable Members of Both Houſes,

Their moſt obliged

Humble Servant,

WILLIAM GREAVES B. B.

REASONS, &c.

AS the attention of the public, for many obvious reaſons of humanity and prudence, is, with great propriety, turned to conſider of means for relieving the Hardſhips the Poor now labour under, this favourable opportunity is taken of ſubmitting it to Gentlemen's conſiderations, Whether it is not agreeable to juſtice, to humanity, and to the true principles of policy, every free, much more every commercial government is founded on, *That every man ſhould be permitted to live where he can beſt, by his induſtry, earn his bread*, and provide for the maintenance of himſelf and family, till, by ſome demerit of his own, he forfeits that liberty, or becomes *chargeable to the pariſh he lives in?*

And, Whether, in conſequence of the act of 13th and 14th Car. II. about removals of the Poor, many induſtrious families, free-born ſubjects of England, are not indulged this liberty; but to their own great prejudice, to the diſcouragement of induſtry, and to the great prejudice of the kingdom, by being removed from pariſhes where they could earn their bread, and ſent to thoſe where they have no opportunity of doing ſo, heavy and needleſs expences are neceſſarily brought on pariſhes for their maintenance;

and at the ſame time, that they are refuſed this liberty of earning their bread where they beſt can, till they become chargeable?

Is not every Scotchman and Iriſhman, that comes into England, indulged, nay, has a right to this valuable liberty, of not being removed from a pariſh he comes into, till chargeable; though, as this law now ſtands, an Engliſhman has not? But, as I am always, and have reaſon to be, diffident of my own judgment, though I have acted near forty years as a Juſtice of Peace in different counties; I chuſe to refer (as I ſpeak on a point every one may not have conſidered) to Burn's Juſtice of Peace; a book that has, by the many different editions it has gone through, met with ſome approbation; where, in ſpeaking of the above act in regard to an Iriſh or Scotchman, he ſays, "If they be able to maintain "themſelves, and commit no act of vagrancy, it "doth not appear that they can be removed by "order of two Juſtices, as *perſons likely to become* "*chargeable*. By which means, they ſeem to be in "a better condition in England, than the Engliſh "ſubjects; for that, not being removeable until they "aſk relief, and ſo thereby become vagrants, they "may continue undiſturbed, without the intangle-"ments of a certificate, and conſequently are in a "better capacity."

And, indeed, of this hardſhip, of being removed before chargeable, the candour of every Gentleman, who acts in the commiſſion of the Peace, may be ſafely applied to, Whether it is not the general practice of moſt pariſhes, as ſoon as a labouring man marries and has a child or two, or often as ſoon as his wife is with child (and he is then likelieſt, by the ties of affection to his family, to become an induſtrious ſubject) to apply to the Juſtices to remove them, on an allegation, he is likely to become chargeable?

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And are they not generally removed on ſuch allegation? But it may be ſaid in anſwer, the Juſtices are not bound to remove on ſuch an allegation, but may judge, whether the party is likely to become chargeable. They certainly may; but is it not the general practice to rely too much on the officer's allegation? or indeed, Is not the time uſually allowed for ſpecial ſeſſions too ſhort to examine minutely into ſuch number of caſes of removals, they are applied to to make.

But it may be ſaid farther, that an Engliſhman may apply to his pariſh and get a certificate, and then he won't be removeable till chargeable. But is it not well known, that great numbers of pariſhes won't give any certificates? And how, then, does the caſe of ſuch a free-born Engliſhman differ from that of a vaſſal in foreign countries? He is obliged to ſtarve, or be chargeable to the pariſh he is born in, though he could get his bread where his labour is wanted! And the reaſon is obvious, why many pariſhes won't give certificates; for, as the law now ſtands, the pariſh giving one muſt pay all the charges the pariſh 'tis given to allows the certificate man, as well as the charges of the removal back; and it is well known, the officers of the pariſhes they are given to, do not take ſo much care, when others are to pay the expence, as when they themſelves are; and the extravagant unreaſonableneſs of ſuch bills deters pariſhes from giving any.

But, ſuppoſe a pariſh will give a certificate: the loſs of time in applying for it, the charge of witneſſes to atteſt the execution, and attendance on two Juſtices to allow it, cannot be laid at leſs than the value of a poor man's week's labour: And what good end or purpoſe is anſwered, by laying him under this expence and difficulty? Nay, in fact, by getting it, he is, in many reſpects, in a worſe ſituation

ation than before he took it; for, by the *certificate act*, he is debarred from gaining a ſettlement, he before could do by ſeveral ways: The likelieſt way, indeed, left him, is to hire *ten pounds a year*; and this very favour ſubjects him ſtill to greater hardſhips; for advantage is taken of his neceſſity, to make him pay an unreaſonable rent, above the fair value, and have numberleſs trials between pariſhes, whether it is a fair rent or no. In ſhort, the needleſs expences pariſhes are run to, by this ill policy in regard to their poor, would, in many places, half maintain them; and, after all this bandying the Poor about from place to place, not only no benefit is received, but an almoſt incredible needleſs expence is incurred; for if any one will attentively look into the ſeveral articles of the overſeers accounts, he will be aſtoniſhed to find how ſmall a part of it the weekly collection of the poor amounts to; ſo little, that I have often thought many pariſhes might, without impropriety, ſtile their rates, Rates for diſtreſſing the Poor, inſtead of Rates for the relief of them.

It has long appeared to me, and is ſubmitted to Gentlemen's conſiderations, whether a ſhort bill to put an Engliſhman upon the ſame footing with an Iriſh or Scotchman, not to be removeable till chargeable, would not greatly encourage induſtry, and greatly leſſen the needleſs expences pariſhes are now at with one another; he getting himſelf examined, on coming into ſuch pariſh, as to his laſt ſettlement, and before a Juſtice of Peace of the diviſion, and lodging it with the overſeer?

And, I own, it has long appeared to me, that if Gentlemen had given their attention to look into what the needleſs expences of pariſhes are, and are put to needleſsly, that have no real foundation in policy or good ſenſe, though all come under the denomination

nomination of poor rates; and to remedy them, there would, perhaps, have been no occaſion for houſes of induſtry; which, at the ſame time, it muſt be allowed are houſes of confinement; as the rates for the real relief of the Poor would be ſo reduced as to make it needleſs to have had recourſe to that remedy. Many proofs of this needleſs expence might be added, but it may be more prudent to attempt this moſt material alteration.

This bill was not endeavoured to be introduced into the Houſe of Commons, till the principles of the plan had been carefully conſidered and approved of by ſome very reſpectable members of both Houſes of Parliament, and by perſons alſo of diſtinguiſhed characters, for their great knowledge in the laws of this country. And as the intentions of it were calculated to make a material alteration in part of the preſent ſyſtem of our Poor laws, in which both the landed and commercial concerns of this kingdom muſt be intereſted, it was ſuggeſted, that though they apprehended it would be too late to get ſuch a bill *then* paſſed into a law, as the ſeſſions was ſo far advanced, and the time and attention of both Houſes were ſo much engroſſed by the affairs of the Eaſt-India Company; yet, that it might be proper to have it *then* brought into the lower Houſe, that perſons might be appriſed of what was intended by it; in order, that if any objections were made there or without doors, either to the principles on which it was founded, or to any bad conſequences that were likely to enſue, from ſuch a liberty being given to the Poor, that is the induſtrious Poor, thoſe objections might be fully conſidered and obviated, if they were not *ſubſtantially* founded; and alſo to have the original deſigns and intentions of the 13th and 14th of Charles the Second, more maturely and fully conſidered, than they had been before the bill was firſt moved.

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He therefore takes the liberty of ſubmitting to calm and public conſideration, whether that act (which makes up ſo material a part of our Poor law-ſyſtem) has not been greatly miſunderſtood, or moſt ſtrangely perverted; and alſo made ſubſervient to many cruel and oppreſſive purpoſes, which the legiſlature never could, or did intend, at the time of paſſing it? The preamble of that act ſets forth, "That by reaſon of ſome defects in the law, *poor* "*people* are not reſtrained from going from one "pariſh to another; and therefore endeavour to "ſettle themſelves in thoſe pariſhes where there is "the beſt ſtock, and the largeſt commons or waſtes "to build cottages, and the moſt wood for them to "burn *or* deſtroy, and when they have conſumed "it, then to another pariſh, and at laſt become "rogues and vagabonds." It is from the preamble of public acts of Parliament, that we muſt collect the nature and ſpirit of thoſe acts, and the deſigns and views of the legiſlative powers in paſſing them; the preambles ſetting forth, ſome advantage propoſed to be obtained, or ſome evil to be remedied, for the benefit of government and the community; and then, by the enacting clauſes, preſcribing the means and powers by which ſuch advantage is to be effected, or ſuch evil prevented. It may not be improper to obſerve here, that no ſet of perſons (rambling about in the manner deſcribed in the above recited preamble) has ever been noticed in the accounts of thoſe times, except that infamous tribe of vagrants the Gypſies; who have been long ſuffered to ramble about from place to place, through moſt parts of the kingdom, to the great terror and detriment of perſons living in lone or remote houſes, and to the great ſhame and diſgrace of our police; and, therefore, may it not be reaſonably preſumed, that the act itſelf was chiefly, if not ſolely, pointed againſt

againſt them, and ſuch like common ſtrollers and vagrants; for it appears moſt plain and evident, from that preamble, that the ſpirit and intention of that law, can only reſpect perſons of an idle, diſſolute and rambling diſpoſition, ſuch as they then were, and ſtill are; and *therefore* ought not to be taken as extending either its meaning or powers to honeſt, peaceable induſtrious mechanics and labourers, who are following their reſpective trades and callings, with comfort and advantage to themſelves, and benefit alſo to the public, within ſuch pariſhes and places as they are, *caſually*, reſiding in. For the evil intended to be prevented by that act, is of *idle people wandering about from one pariſh to another*, which practice, in time, begets in them ſuch a habit of idleneſs, and ſuch an averſion to honeſt labour, that they become abſolute vagrants, and conſequently a burthen and nuiſance to ſociety. And it is alſo intended (as is equally evident from the ſame preamble) to prevent another evil of thoſe times, "*the burning or deſtroying of wood* in various places, "by ſuch wandering people;" therefore, to remedy and prevent *thoſe* evils, it was judged neceſſary to reſtrain ſuch idle, miſchievous people from rambling about, and confine them to the pariſhes or places where they originally and legally belonged; that they might be neceſſitated to labour for their own maintenance there, and by ſuch means, be cured of that *idle, rambling diſpoſition*, from which thoſe evils had taken their riſe, and which the legiſlature had then in view to cure and prevent, *by the diſcretionary powers* therein given to magiſtrates and pariſh officers, for effecting thoſe ſalutary purpoſes. Such deſigns were well worthy of a Britiſh Parliament, and do great credit to the wiſdom and attention of its members; but can it be ſuppoſed that perſons of ſuch exalted ranks and ſtations, of ſuch improved

abilities

abilities, and veſted with ſuch capacious powers for the welfare of the community, could ever deſignedly and deliberately paſs an act, which, as it is now generally executed, would, *in the moſt deſpotic ſtate*, be conſidered as the moſt cruel and wanton exertion of tyrannic power and inclination that ever was invented? For what can be more ſo than that a member of ſociety, whoſe abilities enable him to be profitable to the public, and to ſupport himſelf and family with comfort and decency in *one place*, may, without any reaſon, or even ſhadow of reaſon, be removed from ſuch place (along with his family) to *another*, where his abilities, not being wanted, are of no value to the public; and he having no opportunity of exerciſing them, is at once reduced, from ſuch a comfortable and decent ſubſiſtence, to a ſtate of indigence and miſery; which, of conſequence, muſt entail unhappineſs and deſpondency upon himſelf, and a heavy charge and burden upon the pariſh he is removed to. This ſurely would be the certain means to diſcourage induſtry and oppreſs the induſtrious, to countenance injuſtice and cruelty, deſpoil numbers of their comfort and ſupport, without any crime or even fault of their own; and to afford a ready and certain expedient for the tyrannic, unfeeling, and crafty part of our ſpecies, to harraſs, plague, and oppreſs, thouſands of induſtrious labourers and handy-craftſmen, who may undeſignedly, (but unfortunately for themſelves) have given ſome trifling offence to a wealthy neighbour, or interfered, by their trades and occupations, with ſome ſordid griping wretch, whoſe feelings and regards never extended beyond himſelf and his own paltry concerns. Such a deſign would be, in effect, to level all diſtinctions between good and evil—betwixt *virtuous* induſtry and *idle* profligacy; therefore, it may fairly and juſtly be inferred, that there could

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be no ſuch deſign in the Parliament, when that act was paſſed; as it is ſo *utterly* unworthy the wiſdom, juſtice, and humanity of that auguſt body. Yet, that this act (though well intended) has been perverted to many unworthy and evil purpoſes of ſelf-intereſt and pernicious monopoly; and too often, I fear, alſo, to gratify the wicked deſigns and views of tyranny, malevolence, and revenge, through the miſapprehenſion or inadvertency of thoſe who are entruſted with the execution of it, is too notorious to require a detail of facts, a recital of which would be painful, as many inſtances muſt occur to moſt Gentlemen, who have been at all converſant in courts of juſtice, or much employed in the execution of the Poor laws.

The Legiſlature, in the 22d year of his late Majeſty, very kindly and wiſely thought proper to grant an indulgence to "all Officers, Mariners and "Soldiers, who had been employed in his Majeſty's "ſervice, and had never deſerted, of ſetting up, and "exerciſing ſuch trades as they were apt for, with-"out being ſued or moleſted, in any town within "Great Britain and Ireland; notwithſtanding any "by-laws, ſtatutes, cuſtoms, or excluſive privileges "to the contrary, or even the ſtatute of the 5th of "Eliz." and this proper indulgence was expected to have given great advantages to perſons who had deſerved ſo very well of their country; but being ſtill liable to the attacks, and left expoſed to the miſapplied powers, of that Removal Act, the good intentions of the Legiſlature, in their favour, were totally fruſtrated. This defect, I humbly preſume, induced Parliament to paſs another Act, in the third year of his preſent Majeſty's reign, confirming the rights of ſetting up and exerciſing trades in privileged places; and then *enacting*, *further*, "that "neither they, nor their wives or children, during "the

" the time they ſhall exerciſe ſuch trades, be re-
" moveable from ſuch place, to their laſt legal
" place of ſettlement, by virtue of any law now in
" being, relative to the ſettlement of the poor, until
" they ſhall become *actually* chargeable." This is a kind and partial repeal of the Removal Act, as far as relates to thoſe claſſes of our brave countrymen; and with great pleaſure it is confeſſed, that thoſe men, who had not only ſo nobly defended our lives and properties at home, but alſo, in ſo ſhort a period, and in ſuch an aſtoniſhing manner, extended our conqueſts to the moſt remote parts of the globe; and, by a ſeries of unparallelled victories, raiſed our fame, our power and martial glory, to a pitch of greatneſs ſuperior to any that is *truly recorded*, either in Grecian or Roman ſtory, deſerved every indulgence, every reward, that a grateful and generous nation could with prudence beſtow: at the ſame time, it muſt be, ſurely, allowed, that *thoſe* alſo who have *been* the foundation, and are *now* the ſupporters of our power and greatneſs, as well as the *true ſource* of our wealth and happineſs; *thoſe*, who have ſo *eſſentially* contributed to make our name and ſtrength ſo formidable as well as reſpectable, in every part of the known world; I mean the *honeſt*, *hardy labourers*, thoſe induſtrious tillers of our fruitful ſoil, and the *ingenious*, *diligent mechanics*, thoſe workers up of the natural productions and riches of our happy iſland; they are ſurely entitled, alſo, to every reaſonable indulgence that can enſure their eaſe and comfort, ought to be ſecured from every needleſs and vexatious hardſhip, and effectually guarded from every ſpecies of cruelty, inſult and oppreſſion, which they now lay under, from this act of the 13th and 14th of Charles the 2d. as it is too generally executed. Many more reaſons might be urged in favour of the intended Bill, but I ſhall only mention one, which

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is, that as this preſent law is now too often and too generally made uſe of for removing perſons upon a preſumption or poſſibility of becoming chargeable, it is very unfavourable to matrimony; an inſtitution that has ever been ſtrongly encouraged and promoted by all wiſe and politic nations: but it happens to be the miſtaken policy of moſt of our very wiſe pariſh officers, that as ſoon as a young man is entered into that ſtate of life, which is moſt likely to make him a good and uſeful member of ſociety, to endeavour to get him removed to the place of his legal ſettlement, out of pretence, or perhaps for ſome worſe reaſon, that he may ſoon have a family, that may *poſſibly* bring ſome charge upon the pariſh. Young men intimidated by frequent examples of ſuch ſeverity, and apprehending that they themſelves may meet with the ſame cruel treatment, are afraid and unwilling to marry; and inſtead of doing ſo, too often ſeduce and debauch young women, get them with child, and then ungenerouſly leave them to ſhift for themſelves in a very helpleſs condition: thus, having deſerted the place of their reſidence and employ, and being afraid, from the certainty of expence or puniſhment, ever to return there any more, they ſoon get into an unſettled, debauched way of life, acquire a habit of idleneſs and ſtrolling, and never more become uſeful members of the community; but too often, 'tis feared, fall into a wicked, profligate courſe of life, proceed from one ſtage and degree of vice to another, 'till grown ripe in iniquity, they fall an early and unhappy ſacrifice to the juſt laws of their country, thro' this miſtaken policy.

It may now be expected, that ſome notice ſhould be taken of thoſe objections which have been made, either to the inutility or inconveniencies of the intended Bill. As to the firſt, it has been ſaid, that

there would be no occaſion for to remedy the evils and hardſhips ſo complained of, was a clauſe added to the preſent law, empowering the juſtices of the peace, whenever they ſaw ſufficient cauſe for it, to conſtrain pariſh officers to grant certificates to perſons who had a mind to remove into places where they could, or where they imagined they could, maintain themſelves and their families, with more advantage and ſatisfaction. Was it pretty generally known, that the Legiſlature had ſuch a clauſe in contemplation, 'tis preſumed, there would be a *general* clamour, and numberleſs petitions preſented againſt it from all parts of the kingdom, on account of ſuch a new and extraordinary degree of power being given to magiſtrates, of forcing ſo grievous a burthen upon the public; for the inconveniencies of granting ſuch certificates, have been found from *long* and general experience ſo great, that in many parts of the kingdom, they are now, upon every occaſion, refuſed; and perhaps not without ſufficient reaſon, as the pariſhes granting ſuch certificates, muſt be liable to every expence of removing back the certificate-perſons, ſhould any misfortune, calamity or death, make any part of them chargeable, let the diſtance to be removed to, be ever ſo great: And the pariſhes removing back, not being liable to any expence, and being certain of being reimburſed in all the charges incurred thereby, are found not to be very tender of the pockets of others, or in their mode of proceeding diſpoſed to pay any due attention to a proper and prudent œconomy.

It has been objected to the preſent Bill, "that "the taking off ſuch a reſtraint, and allowing per- "ſons to reſide where it is moſt convenient and ad- "vantageous to themſelves, many labourers will be "tempted to leave the places of their preſent ſet- "tlement, and go into other pariſhes where higher

"wages

" wages are given." That this may be the conſe-quence of the intended Bill, cannot be denied; but, at the ſame time, it is ſtrongly contended, that ſuch a liberty will be ſo far from operating as a general evil, that it will operate as a general good; though poſſibly it may prove a temporary and local inconveniency to a few places, as labourers will then go where they are moſt wanted, and pariſhes where they are not wanted, will not then be ſo much overburthened with them, as Sudbury, Colcheſter, and other places are ſaid to be, where the poor's rates have been reported to amount to twelve or fourteen ſhillings in the pound; and is it reaſonable that poor labourers ſhould be confined in pariſhes where they are forced to take lower wages than neighbouring ones give, and which they cannot ſubſiſt by, yet be reſtrained from going to others where they could get ſuch advanced ones as would enable them to live comfortably? Will any gentleman of humanity ſay, *it is reaſonable*, that ſuch a power of *local* tyranny ſhould be longer countenanced? Let every man make the poor man's caſe his own, and his own conſcience will give him a ready anſwer.

Another objection has been made and chiefly relied on, " That by this Bill any labourer may go " to reſide in a pariſh where he is not legally ſet-" tled, and may be afflicted with ſome grievous " ſickneſs, during which it may be dangerous or " improper to remove him. That he muſt there-" fore be maintained during ſuch ſickneſs, by that " pariſh, and this will or may be the caſe in a " greater or leſs degree, with every pariſh in the " kingdom." To this objection, a better or fuller anſwer need not be given, than by an extract I have taken the liberty of tranſcribing, from a letter of a gentleman of rank and fortune, who to the goodneſs of his heart, has the happineſs of a clear head

and a very comprehenſive knowledge of the laws and true intereſt of his country, and who properly obſerves, "that the evil and the good are to be "weighed together, perfection is not to be expected, "but where the good greatly preponderates, the "lighter evil is not to be regarded. Beſides, the "evil is perhaps no evil at all; for though each "pariſh may ſuffer in its turn, each pariſh in its "turn alſo, will have the good fortune of finding "its pariſhioner maintained in his ſickneſs by "ſome other pariſh; ſo that on the whole, there "will be equality."

The only objection that I have ever ſeen in print, to the principles or conſequences of this intended Bill, appeared in one of the Ipſwich Journals, ſome time in the laſt ſummer, which is indeed barely local, and therefore ſcarcely deſerves a ſerious anſwer. The fact is, that in that part of Suffolk, there are ſome houſes of induſtry erected, for ſerving ſome extenſive Hundreds in that county, and where ſome of the poor muſt be confined, of courſe, at a pretty conſiderable diſtance from their friends, and therefore, if this Bill was to paſs, which will give liberty to perſons to go and live in other pariſhes without a certificate, ſays the writer, "the governors of "thoſe houſes would have art and addreſs enough "to inſinuate to the poor of theſe Hundreds, they "had now a fine opportunity of getting out of *thoſe* "pariſhes within *thoſe* Hundreds, and of going to "reſide in *other* pariſhes, whereby ſuch pariſhes as "they go into, would be over-ſtocked with inha-"bitants, and that *therefore* the Bill ought to be op-"poſed." This objection is merely local, and is indeed paying but a very poor compliment to thoſe houſes of induſtry, where, I dare ſay, from the knowledge I have of ſome of the governors, the poor are not treated with ſo little care, humanity and tenderneſs,

derneſs, as to occaſion the flight of every man that can get away, from the Hundreds thoſe houſes are now in, to any others: but if this objection has any weight at all in it, it really anſwers itſelf; for ſhould they actually go, as this objection ſuppoſes, they ſtill well know, that if they are chargeable, even to the value of a ſingle penny, to the pariſhes they go into, they are liable to be removed back immediately to the pariſhes they came from; and conſequently the dread of being ſent back, will make them *æconomically* induſtrious, and induce them, at all events, to lay by a little money to prevent the neceſſity of aſking relief in caſe of ſickneſs or any unfortunate accident.

Some inſinuations have been thrown out againſt this Bill, as if, from the liberal principles it is founded upon, it might be likely to encourage that ſpirit of emigration amongſt the lower claſſes of our people, which has of late been ſo much lamented; but this unhappy ſeceſſion from our iſland, is far from originating from any ſuch indulgence to one of the moſt juſt and natural rights of mankind, which this bill means to reſtore: No, it proceeds from cauſes and principles diametrically oppoſite thereto; ſuch as cruelty, oppreſſion, and contemptuous neglect of them and their intereſts, together with the difficulty of obtaining every neceſſary of life the Poor are to ſubſiſt by; even without taking into conſideration the accidental unfavourable ſeaſons we have of late had. 'Tis ſuch hardſhips and difficulties *alone*, that can ever effectually and generally ſubdue that *powerful natal attachment*, which Providence, no doubt for many wiſe purpoſes, has implanted in the human breaſt: for, *neſcio qua natale ſolum dulcedine ducit*, is found to be a true obſervation, even in the moſt unfavourable climes and ſituations. People of improved abilities and polite education, may fancy

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and ſtyle themſelves citizens of the world, and be, or affect to be, ſuperior to any local engagements---indeed ambition, avarice, vanity, or faſhion, are likely to lead them, from ſuch a natural prepoſſeſſion, to places where the objects of thoſe paſſions or humours are moſt likely to be gratified; and a ſtrong attachment to the latter, may, in time, entirely obliterate all impreſſions of the former. But the caſe will be widely different in the lower claſſes of mankind, whoſe wiſhes never aſpired to more than a bare competence. Contented with the lot which Providence has aſſigned them, though it has fallen upon a barren ſoil, or left them expoſed upon the craggy mountain's top, ſtill they live happy and contented, whilſt they can chearfully earn their bread, though with care and hard labour, ſurrounded by their families, their friends and old acquaintance. Inſtances of this ſtrong attachment, may be met with amongſt moſt nations of the known world; but no ſtronger, perhaps, any where, than amongſt ſome of the Swiſs cantons, whoſe honeſt, hardy inhabitants prefer a barren, rugged ſoil, (with the poſſeſſion of their beloved liberty and independency) to the moſt delicious ſpots upon the globe. Thoſe who are accuſtomed to look upon the preſent face of things *only*, may be led to imagine, that this iſland, which now makes ſo very conſiderable a figure amongſt all the great powers of the known world, derives its *preſent* ſtrength, its riches and ſplendour, from its own *internal* powers and advantages, and not from that *virtuous induſtry* and ingenuity, which, under the kind foſtering care of civil and religious liberty, can ſoon change the face of any country, and, out of weakneſs and contempt, produce power and reſpect. Let ſuch only conſider the picture of this iſland, as drawn by a moſt maſterly pen, at the time of the Roman Conqueſt. Cicero, in a letter to Atticus, when it was under

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contemplation, whether it was worth conquering or not, ſays, "We are in ſuſpenſe about the Britiſh "war: it is certain that the acceſs of the iſland is "ſtrongly fortified, and it is known already, that "there is not *a grain of ſilver in it*, nor any thing "elſe *except* ſlaves." My old and learned friend, Doctor Middleton, upon quoting this, and ſeveral other paſſages to the ſame purpoſe, makes the following ſenſible reflection: "From their railleries of "this kind, *on the barbarity and miſery of our iſland*, "one cannot help reflecting on the ſurprizing fate "and revolutions of kingdoms; how *Rome*, once "the miſtreſs of the world, the ſeat of arms, em-"pire and glory, lies ſunk in ſloth, ignorance, and "poverty, enſlaved to the moſt cruel, as well as to "the moſt contemptible of tyrants, *Superſtition and* "*religious Impoſture*; while this remote country, an-"tiently the jeſt and contempt of the *polite Romans*, "is become the happy ſeat of liberty, plenty, and "letters, flouriſhing in all the arts and refinements "of civil life; yet, running, perhaps, the ſame courſe "which *Rome* itſelf had run before it—from vir-"tuous induſtry to wealth; from wealth to luxury; "from luxury to an impatience of diſcipline and "corruption of morals; till, by a total degeneracy "and loſs of virtue, being grown ripe for deſtruc-"tion, it falls a prey at laſt to ſome hardy oppreſſor, "and with the loſs of liberty loſing every thing elſe "that is valuable, ſinks gradually again into its ori-"ginal barbariſm." May kind Heaven avert the omen, by engaging, in due time, the attention of the legiſlature, to prevent the fatal conſequences which are above predicted!

The author of the above ſheets has no merit in regard to the intended bill, but, from having many years experience as a Juſtice of the Peace, and having often, with great pain, beheld the many hardſhips brought

brought upon the induſtrious Poor, of throwing together ſuch hints as occurred to him, for Gentlemen's obſervations to found a Bill upon. It would therefore be unpardonable in him, to omit his beſt acknowledgments to all thoſe honourable and worthy Gentlemen, who, finding the principles of the Bill ſo entirely according with the benevolent feelings of their own breaſts, as well as with their ideas of juſtice and humanity, have ſo kindly taken it under their patronage; and, in particular, to that worthy member of the Houſe of Commons, who ſo chearfully and ſo ably undertook to introduce it into that Honourable Houſe.

FINIS.